A SERMON

Preached before the Honourable Houſe of Commons, now aſſembled in

PARLIAMENT,

At their publike Faſt, *November* 17. 1640. Upon

2 Chron. 15. 2.

The Lord is with you, while yee bee with him: and if yee ſeek him, he will be found of you: but if yee forſake him, he will forſake you.

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642

TO THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS now assembled in PARLIAMENT.

When first it pleased You *to require our service in Preaching at* Your *late Publike Fast, wee resolved to close our eyes against all Clouds of discouragement arising from our own unworthinesse and insufficiency, and to set our selves wholly to seeke what the Lord would command us to deliver in his Name, at such a time, to such an Honourable and awfull assembly, with a totall denyall of our selves.* Psalm. 82.

And albeit wee should have beene glad to have beene spared this exposing of our selves to the publike view; yet, You *appoynting otherwise, wee hold it equall that the joynt* entreaty *of the* Representative Body *of the whole* Communalty *of the Kingdome should be regarded, and have chosen rather that others should censure us of* Weaknesse, *than* You *should charge us with* Disobedience: *Your* Request *being no lesse than a* Command; *and your acceptance sufficient to give value to things of themselves both meane and worthlesse.*

Wherefore according to our Duty, so willingly

lingly as the consciousnesse of our slender performances would permit, wee obey Your Order, and doe now, although somewhat late, humbly offer these two plaine Sermons (for, who expects other in a Fast?) at the footstoole of Your Tribunall, as a lasting Monument of Our Gratitude for Your encouraging Approbation of, and solemne Thanks for our weake endevours in the preaching of them.

If in some places wee have taken that just liberty which all others have done before us, wee trust it shall not bee imputed; so long as in the most materiall passages wee have kept to the very words which at first wee used, so farre as was necessarie; and have not wittingly swerved an haires breadth from the sence and substance in the residue.

Wee have indeed pared off some Repetitions, which in speaking had their use, the more to inculcate, and the better to set on the matter, but would not have beene so gratefull in Writing, because Readers account every thing too long, that hath any thing too much. Wee have likewise contracted some expressions, which in discourses of so much length, could hardly bee so concise as wee desired, Memory being not alwayes at hand to give birth to every conception of our mindes in such formes as wee intended. And some few things wee have added, where straites of time, or defect of memory made some balkes in the first deliverie.

What ever our performances bee, wee humbly leave

leave them in Your hands, and under Your Honourable Protection, which wee are bold to expect, becauſe they are by your owne Act drawne from us, and that in a time ſo queaſie and diſtempered as can hardly beare that Food or Phyſicke which is needfull for it. Seldome doth a wiſe Reproſe, *a neceſſary* Exhortation, *or wholſome* Doctrine *meet with an* obedient Eare.

The God of Heaven ſteere all your weighty conſultations by his owne Counſell to his owne Glory; cover You *ſtill under his owne Wing, and make* You *the moſt* accompliſht, *beſt* united, *and moſt* ſucceſſefull *and* glorious Houſe of Commons *that ever ſate in that* High Court; *but chiefely in the effectuall endeavouring of a further Sanction of, and ſtronger Guard about our* Palladium, *the true* Religion, *already eſtabliſhed among us, in the perfecting of the* Reformation *of it; in the erecting, maintaining, protecting, and incouraging of an able, godly, faithfull, zealous profitable, preaching* * Miniſtery, *in every pariſh Church and Chappell throughout* England *and* Wales; *and in the interceding to the Kings ſacred Majeſty for the ſetting up of a Faithfull, Judicious, and Zealous* Magiſtracy, *where yet the ſame is wanting, to bee ever at hand to backe ſuch a* Miniſtery: *without either of which, not onely the* power of godlineſſe *will ſoone degenerate into* formality, *and* zeale *into Luke-warmneſſe; but* Popery, Arminianiſme, Socinianiſme, Prophaneneſſe, Apoſtacy, *and* Atheiſme *it ſelfe will more and more croud in upon us, and prevaile against us, doe*

* This was our joynt and earneſt ſuit to You, in Preaching, and we now again beſeech You to ſet your hearts and hands to this *work*, as *Benhail, Obadiah*, and other Princes in *Iudah* did. 2 *Chron.* 17. 7, 8, 9.

doe You *all* You *can by all other meanes.*

And now, commending You to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build *You* up further, and to give You an inheritance among all them which bee sanctified; *and these our Labours to his further blessing, whereby all may speedily be brought under the line of his* Covenant, *which is our* safety; *that hee may* continue *with us, which is our* Glory; and wee with him, *which is* our happinesse:

Acts 20. 32.

The summe of both Sermons

Wee rest,

Yours, most devoted to the service of your Faith in all Duty,

Cornelius Burges.
Stephen Marshall.

642

A Sermon Preached before the Honourable house of Commons, at their publike Faſt.

2 CHRON. 15. 2.

The Lord is with you while yee be with him, and if yee ſeeke him hee will be found of you: but if yee forſake him, he will forſake you.

THis portion of Scripture, is a part of a Sermon preached to the whole body of the Kingdome of *Judah*; and a fitter I do not know in all the Bible to be preached upon to the *Repreſentative body* of a Chriſtian *State*; eſpecially upon a day when they are *drawing nigh to God*. The more inexcuſable ſhould I be in adventuring to ſhew my weakneſſe at this time, in this place, were I not able to call the moſt

Introduction, ſetting forth 1 The fitneſſe of the Text.

Introduction. High to witneſſe, that nothing but conſcience of my duty kept me (with *Ionah*) from running away from the Lords work. But *Amos the herdſman* muſt prophe-
Amos 7. 14, 15. ſie at the *Kings Chappell* when God commands him.

The ſpeciall end of your meeting this day, is to *afflict your ſouls before God*, that ſo with *Ezra*, you might *ſeeke a right way* for your ſelves, and the weighty affaires of his Majeſty', and the whole State: and the
Ezr. 8. 21. ſpeciall errand I have to deliver from the Lord, is to aſſure you of the ſame truth, although in other words, which *Ezra* told the *Perſian* Emperour, that *the hand*
Verſe 22. *of God is upon them for good that ſeek him; but his power and wrath againſt all them that forſake him*, viz. That *God will be with you, while you be with him.*

2 The ſtate of the *Iewiſh* Church, which occaſioned the Text. Which Text that you may the better underſtand, give me leave to carry you a little back, and give you a plain view of the ſtate of the Church of *Iudah* at that time.

In the dayes of *Rehoboam* there had been an horrible apoſtaſie from the purity of Gods worſhip: Religion was very much corrupted, and the forces of the Kingdom were exceedingly weakned. And in *Abijahs* time things grew worſe and worſe. But now when *Aſa* (being a godly man) came to the Crowne, he begins at the right end, and makes it his firſt worke to ſet upon reformation of *Religion*, taking away the *Altars of the ſtrange Gods and the high places, brake down the Images,*
Chap. 14. 2, 3, 4. *cut down the Groves*, *commanded* Judah *to ſeeke the Lord God of their Fathers, and to doe the Law and the Commandements*, caſting out whatſoever was a ſtench in the Lords noſtrills, and he proſpered in whatſoever he put his hand unto.

This done, hee then calls all his Nobles and Princes, and Elders together, and tells them that they had ſought

sought the Lord in matters of *Religion*, and God had beene found of them, and that now they should goe and fortifie the Kingdome; and so they did in all the Cities, and prospered. But in the midst of this worke comes out *Zerah* the *Cushite*, the *Ethiopian* (or rather the *Arabian*, *Ethiopia* lying beyond *Egypt*) with an Army of a *thousand thousand, and three hundred Chariots*, (it may be the greatest Army that ever you read of in any story) with these he breaks in suddenly upon *Asa*. But he humbles himselfe before God, betakes himselfe to prayer, tells the Lord that it was *all one with him to helpe by many or few*. And in the Lords name he went out to encounter with that huge Army; over which the Lord gave him a glorious victory, and the spoile of the enemies Countrey to boot. *Introduction.* Verse 7.

Now as they were comming backe to *Hierusalem*, the Lord calls out *Azariah the sonne of Oded*, to make the gratulatory oration for their safe returne and conquest, in these words that I have read, and so forward to verse the eighth; and so I am come to my Text. 3 The coherence and Analysis.

In which (that I may make as briefe a way as I can possibly to the matter that I shall insist upon) two things are to be unfolded.

First, the scope and intent of the Prophet, and that is laid downe in the latter end of his speech, *Be strong therefore, and let not your hands be weake*: that is, goe on with the good work of Reformation of Religion, wherewith you were in hand before the enemy interrupted you. Verse 7.

Secondly, the arguments whereby this is pressed, and they are two.

The first is taken from their *owne present happinesse*, who were in Gods wayes: *The Lord is with you while*

Introduction. *yee are with him, and if yee seeke him he will bee found of you: but if yee forsake him, he will forsake you.*

The second is taken from the *misery of the ten Tribes*, who were out of Gods way, concerning whom hee speaks to this effect, *that for a long time Israel* (that is the ten Tribes) *had bin without God, and without a teaching Priest, and without law:* and as they had cast off *God*, so God had cast off them: howbeit, if they would have sought to God, and turned to him, God would have bin found of them: but they going on in the way of desperate apostacy the Lord vexed them every where, in the City, in the Country, in the Family; every where God was too strong for them, (as certainly God will make every one to know that he hath a hard match to encounter with, that dares to beare Armes against the Lord.) And so from their *misery* hee presseth *Asa* and his people to goe on in the right course, to prevent the like for comming upon themselves.

This second argument of the *misery* of the ten Tribes belongs not to my worke.

I betake my selfe therefore to the other, wherein I shall spend the allotted time for this exercise, namely, The *present happinesse* of the Church of the *Iewes*, that were in Gods way: in which observe these two things.

4. The division.

First, what the *happinesse* was that they enjoyed, in these words, *The Lord is with you.*

Secondly, the *Condition* upon which they enjoyed this *happinesse*, or the termes upon which they held it; and that is,

First more generally propounded; *The Lord is with you, while you are with him.*

Secondly, more particularly and exegetically expounded in the next words, *If yee seeke him, hee will*

bee

be found of you; but if yee forsake him he will forsake you.

I begin with the first of them, *The present happinesse* of the Church of the *Iewes, Iehovah is with you.* Where there is but one question to bee answered for the cleering of the Doctrine, that I shall a while insist upon, and that is, *what presence of God is here intended* by the Prophet? *Iehovah* is every where; *Whither shall I go from thy presence?* Nay, he is not onely present every where, but he manifests his presence every where, every herbe shewes it, all the Creatures speak God in them. Nor onely so, but oft times the manifestation of Gods presence is the torture and misery of the people to whom he is present. In *Isai.* 33.14 when God sends them word that he would come among them, presently it follows, *The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearefulnes hath surprized the Hypocrite, who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* And in *Ier.* 4.23. the Prophet *beheld the earth, and loe it was without forme, and voyd; the mountaines, and loe they trembled; the nations, and they were wasted to nothing:* what was the reason? *because of the presence of the Lord.* What *presence* then is here intended?

The Churches happinesse.

The first part, viz. *The happinesse of the Church* Psal. 139. 7. &c.

For that, through Gods providence, the mornings worke hath saved me part of my labour. For in effect the *presence* intended in this Text is Gods *presence* in the *Covenant of Grace*, in which he is so joyned with a people, that they also are joyned unto him. God to be *joyned* with a people, and to be in *Covenant* with them, in the Scripture phrase is all one. So that the Lesson which it affords is this.

Jer 50. 5. Isai 56. 3. 6.

The presence of God in his Covenant of Grace with any people, is the greatest glory, and happinesse that they can enjoy. Doct. 1.

The Churches happineſſe.

The Prophet here encouraging them to go on and to feare nothing, uſeth onely this ſentence, that God will be with them: As if he had ſaid, you ſhall have all the happpineſſe that you can wiſh, *God will be with you.*

In proſecuting this poynt I ſhall endeavour two things.

Firſt, to *demonſtrate the truth* of it out of the Scripture.

Secondly, to make a briefe application of it.

The happineſſe of the *Church* proved, 1 By *Scriptures.*

For the firſt, ſee how cleare it is in the Scriptures, in *Deut.* 4. 7, 8. *Moſes* ſpeakes of the *Iſraelites* after this manner: *What Nation (in all the world) is ſo great as thou art?* All their neighbours ſhould ſay, ſurely this is a *great people*, a *wiſe*, a happy people: I pray you what was their condition when *Moſes* thus magnified them? there were 600000 men of them in a deſolate, barren, howling wilderneſſe: There was not one houſe for a man to hide his head; but onely floting Tents, ſome covered with cloathes, ſome with boughes:

Deu. 29 5. No land that they could either ſow, or plough, or reape: No trading; hardly a man that had two ſuits to his backe, (but as ſome thinke) as their bodies grew, their cloathes grew: as their feet grew, their ſhooes grew: wherein then was their happineſſe? Mark what *Moſes* ſaith *verſ.* 7. *What Nation is there ſo great, who hath God ſo nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things, &c?* There was their happineſſe, that *Iehovah* was *nigh them*, and marched up and downe before them. So you ſhall ſee in *Exod.* 33. the Lord was offended with the people for making of the golden Calfe; In the beginning of the *Chap.* he ſpeaks after this manner to *Moſes*. *Take this people, and carry them to the Land that I have promiſed to give them: It is a Land flowing*

with

642 all 7

with Milke and Honey. I will send my Angell before you, Hee shall drive out all the Nations, and plant you in that goodly Countrey : onely I my selfe will not goe with them, for I shall be so farre provoked by their sinnes, *that I shall fall upon them suddenly, and consume them.* But my Angell shall not leave them till they be setled *in that good Land.* One would have thought that this had beene an excellent offer, thousands would have esteemed it a glorious thing to have an *Angell* of God to goe and plant them in the goodliest Countrey that was under the cope of heaven. But marke how *Moyses* takes it. O Lord, rather kill us all in the Wildernesse, let us never stirre a foote, if thy presence goe not with us. I pray thee, if I have found favour with thee, goe with us thy selfe : wel, saith God, my presence shall goe. *Moyses* presseth againe, let it bee that or nothing : For *wherein else shall it be knowne to the world, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight ? Is it not in that thou goest with us ? So shall wee be separated, I and thy people from all the people that are upon the face of the Earth.* This is the summe of that Chapter. Againe you shall finde in *Psalme* 46. and *Psalme* 48. *David* strangely magnifies *Hierusalem* above all the Cities in the World : Excellent are the straines of Rhetoricke flowing from the Spirit of God in setting forth the glory of that City, which in a word was such, as *All Kings of the Earth should come and looke on*, and *stand amazed at it*. Without question, *Babylon*, or *Niniveh* excelled *Hierusalem* in *Davids* time for outward glory, as farre as the *City* of *London* doth one of our meane Country Townes. What was the glory of *Hierusalem* then ? You shall read in those

The Churches happinesse.

Psalmes

The Churches happineſſe.

Pſalmes *God was with him. God is in the midſt of her: God is knowne in her Palaces.* And every where this is the thing he cries up: it was a glorious place, becauſe *Iehovah* was there.

And in *Pſalme* 144. The Pen-man of it ſo farre extols even the common mercies that God oft times beſtowes upon a people, that they then become Bleſſed, *When their Sonnes grow up as plants, and their Daughters as the corners of the Temple, poliſhed after the manner of a Palace; their Garners affording all ſtore, their Oxen ſtrong to labour; that there is no breaking in, and carrying into Captivity. Bleſſed,* ſaith hee, *are the people that are in ſuch caſe.* But marke how hee gives a daſh to all hee had ſaid, in compariſon of that he had to ſay of the bleſſedneſſe of Gods people, *Yea,* rather *happy are the people whoſe God is the Lord.* You ſhall ſee alſo in the latter end of *Ezechiel*, Chapter 40. and in *Revelation* 21. ſuch an hyperbolicall deſcription of a moſt glorious City the new *Hieruſalem*, as never had parallell. And what is the *Glory* of that *City?* Read but the laſt words in the Propheſie of *Ezechiel, The name of that City from that Day ſhall bee* THE LORD IS THERE. As if hee had ſaid, would you have an abridgement of all the excellencies of this City and Temple? This it is, *Iehovah is there.* And in *Revelation* 21. *The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are there.*

On the other ſide you ſhall ſee it as plaine, when the Lord threatneth the greateſt plague and curſe that can betide a Nation, he never mentions other, above this, that Hee will *depart from them*: as if hee had meant to ſtrike them dead at a blow, by ſaying, *Hee will*

will leave them. That place in *Hosea* Chapter 9. 11. is very remarkable: *As for* Ephraim (that is, the Children of *Israel*, the ten Tribes) *his glory shall flee away as a bird*; that is, suddainly, swiftly, irrecoverably, he shall be utterly undone. What is the matter? The next Verse tels you, *Woe unto them when I depart from them.* If God goe, woe comes; all goes, if God goe. It is a knowne story in the 1. *Samuel* 4. that when the Arke (that was called *the glory of God*) the visible token of Gods presence in the Covenant of Grace, was taken Captiue by the *Phylistines*; as *Phineas* his wife bowed her selfe and travailed, and though they after told her that a *Man-child was borne*, shee regarded it not, but called his name *Ichabod*, saying *The glory is gone*; becaus then Gods *presence* departed from them. *The Churches happinesse.*

What need I say any more? The worke of the *Incarnation* of the Sonne of God, and the *Redemption* of the World by him, was such, that one maine end of making this goodly frame of Heaven and Earth was, that it might be the stage upon which that Worke should be acted. A worke wherein not onely all mans happinesse lyes, and whence it flowes; but wherein all Gods Attributes are glorified to the highest; and for which the Church Triumphant shall thinke Eternity short enough to prayse God. Of this worke (I say) the summe is given in one word, *Immanuell God is with us.*

2 By Reason,

And plaine *Reason* may demonstrate that it must needs be so. What is *glory*, but the shining out of *excellency?* VVhat is *happinesse* but the *fruition* of *the greatest good?* Now there is no *excellency* that *shines* out in any thing, like to that which beames

The Churches happineſſe.

out from God in the Covenant of grace to his people. There is no *good* that any people can enjoy like the fruition of God in that Covenant. It is true, God manifeſts himſelfe to all the Nations in the World (*in him they live, and move, and have their being:*) yet it is as in a darke Cloud, they grope after him, and cannot feele him; but in the Covenant of grace men behold *him with open face*, like the Sunne ſhining in his ſtrength, as through a *Mirrour:* Such a Mirrour as the Prince of *Orange* had, that would ſhew the Sunne in his full bigneſſe and beauty. Thus God ſhines in the Covenant of grace.

2 Cor. 3. 18.

The Prince is virtually preſent in all places of his Kingdome, but his *Court* is his *Glory:* So where God is in his Covenant, there *Heaven* is; therefore this is uſually in the Scripture phraſe called the *Kingdome of heaven.*

But if yet more particularly you require, what *Gods preſence in his Covenant* implyes: As he, who being aſkt what God was, required firſt a day, then two, then three; alledging, that the more he ſtudied it, the leſſe able hee found himſelfe to anſwer it. So the more I thinke of this, the more unable I ſee my ſelfe to make a ſatisfactory anſwer: what I can, take thus; To the Nation of the *Iewes* it implyed ſomething which concernes not us, but myſtically or analogically: As to have the *Arke*, *Vrim* and *Thummim:* to have God to reveale himſelfe in *Viſions* and *Dreames:* To anſwer by *Thunder*, *&c.* which my haſte allowes me not leiſure to explaine. But to them, and to all other people *Gods preſence* in the *Covenant of grace* implyes theſe three things.

The Churches happineſſe further explaned, to conſiſt,

1 Of Gods owning them.

Firſt; the owning and acknowledging of them to

bee

be his owne separated people, knit to him in a league of love: he is *their God*, they are *his people*; they have a propriety in God, and God hath a propriety in them, so that they may say of Him, *This God is our God*; and God of them, *This people is my people*. Now this is the greatest happinesse, nothing can exceed it: It hath bin often questioned, what was the greatest favour that ever Almighty God did for man? Some preferre *Creation* wherein Man received his being, and excellent endowments: some *Redemption*, wherein man is recovered to a better and surer estate than he enjoyed in *Creation*: but out of question to be a *Iedediah*, beloved of God, to be *neare* to God as his Children, as his Spouse; is the comprehension of all that can be said or thought of the happinesse of a people. And if you looke into the Scriptures, you shall see that Gods love to his peculiar people, is such a love as carries with it all relations: It is the love of a Father to his Children; *I will be your Father, and you shall be my Sonnes, and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*. It is the love that a man beares to the wife of his bosome: *I will marry thee to me in righteousnesse, and truth, and mercy*. It is the love of a friend; *I have called you my friends*: And *Abraham*, the Father of all that are in Covenant, he was stiled, *The friend of God*.

The Churches happinesse.

2 Cor 6.

Hos. 2.

Joh. 14.

And from this interest in God flow innumerable priviledges, for being thus *beloved of God*, and precious to him, it followes that they are accepted in their services, that all their sinnes are pardoned, and that they have liberty to aske any thing that is good for them. When *Solomon* was beloved of God, 2 *King.* 3. 5. God bids him, *Aske what I shall doe for thee*: It is but aske and have. *And this is the confidence that*

1 John 5. 14.

The Churches happineſſe,

wee have in him, that if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth us. They haue friendſhip with all his friends: In Zach. 8. 23. *Ten men ſhall lay hold upon the skirt of one that is a Iew,* of whom they be able to ſay, *Wee haue heard that God is with you.* Indeed, to have God thus making himſelfe over to a people, to bee their portion, to love them, and to owne them, is not onely an heaven vpon earth, but the very heaven of heaven.

2 Of Gods aſſiſting and proſpering of them

Secondly, Gods preſence with a people in his Covenant, implyes Gods *aſſiſting* them, and *proſpering* all the workes they put their hands unto. This is the ordinary expreſſion of the Scripture: Every thing *proſpers,* where God is. It is ſayd of *David, whitherſoever (Saul) ſent him, he proſpered: for God was with him.* Every houſe where *Ioſeph* came proſpered, *for God was with him.* In all undertakings, in all Counſels for wars, for peace, for trade, &c. Gods aid and aſſiſtance comes in If they *decree a thing, God will eſtabliſh it.* If they *commit their worke to him, the very thoughts of their hearts ſhall be eſtabliſhed? Whatſoever they doe, God will make it to proſper. Thou O Lord, workeſt all our workes for us.*

1 Chr. 11 9.
Gen. 39.
Iob. 22. 28
Pro. 16. 3.
Pſal. 1.
Iſa. 26. 12.

Whereas now if God be abſent, all mens endeavors are to no purpoſe in any kind. *Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour but in vaine that build it.* It is to no purpoſe to plough that field that God will haue lye fallow. Ye earne much ſaith God, but it comes to nothing, ye ſow much and bring in little, ye eat and have not enough, yee drinke and are not filled; he that earneth wages, puts it into a bottomleſſe purſe. What was the reaſon? the Lord blaſted all. And it muſt needs be ſo, all the ſecond cauſes worke only by vertue of the

Pſal 127.
Hag 1. 6 9

firſt

first, the great wheele carries on all the other.

The Churches happinesse

A notable example of this, that *Gods presence* is mans prosperity, wee have in *Hag.* 2. where when God had told them that the reason of all their ill successe in their enterprizes came from *Gods* withdrawing from them for their unfaithfull walking with him in the matter of rebuilding his house, and that thereupon the people were stirred up to consider their wayes, and to build *Gods Temple*, the Lord tells them, *vers.* 18. that though their seed was not yet in their Barnes, nor any of their trees had brought forth their burthen; and so for ought they could see, they were like to haue as hard a year as before: yet now, saith the Lord, *from this day I will blesse you.* Now you shal have a crop, that there shal not be roome enough to receive it: for if they would build his *Temple*, he would come *and dwell with them.*

3 Of *God* protecting and defending of them.

Thirdly, *Gods presence* in his Covenant implyes his *protection*, and defence of that people against all enemies: It is said of *Ioseph*, he went into *Ægypt*, he was *sold* for a slave: but saith the Text, *God was with him, and deliuered him out of all his afflictions*: None could hurt him, while God was with him. Abundance of excellent Scriptures speake this trueth. Observe two or three comparisons which the Holy Ghost frequently useth, in *Isai.* 4. the latter end, the Lord speakes thus of the Churches of the *Gentiles*, that he would *create upon all the assemblies* (upon all the places where the people should assemble to serve him) a pillar of a Cloud, and a fire to keepe them safe day and night: *for upon all the glory shall be a defence.* Marke, Gods presence in his Ordinances is their *Glory*, and upon all the *Glory* GOD would create a Defence. He compareth Himselfe too a

Acts 7.9

Gen 7.

The Churches happineſſe.

Shield, *I am thy Shield.* Now the nature of a Shield is to take all the blowes, that the body cannot bee hurt, till the Shield be pierced through. In *Zach.* 2. 5. God ſaith he will bee *a wall of fire round about them:* alluding to the cuſtome of Travellers in waſte wilderneſſes, who uſed to make fires round about them in the night, and then none of the wilde beaſts durſt come neare them; ſuch a defence is God to his people: And he often ſaith, he beares *them upon Eagles wings.* Some obſerve, that other Birds carry their young ones in their clawes, (and then the young one may be killed, and the old one not hurt) but the Eagle carries her young upon her back, upon her wings, and ſo they cannot be hurt till ſhee be ſhot through. Excellent is that expreſſion in *Iſay.* the 46. where God comparing himſelfe with the Idols of the Heathens, ſpeakes to this purpoſe, *Their Idols muſt be borne:* but God beares his people: They muſt be *ſet in their place*, and bee kept leaſt they be ſtolne or broken; they muſt defend their gods, but *Iehovah* defends his people: In many places God calls himſelfe the Watch-man of his people, the Leader of them, the Defender of them: all ſignifying thus much, that the ſafety and defence of his people reſts upon his preſence with them.

Some where I have read a Dialogue betwixt a *Iew* and a *Heathen:* After the *Jewes* returne from the Captivity, all the Nations round about them (being enemies to them) a *Pagan* aſked a *Iew* how they could have any hope of ſafety: becauſe (ſaith hee) every one of them is as one ſilly ſheep compaſſed about with fifty wolves? I, but ſaith the *Iew*, we are kept by a ſhepheard that can kill theſe fifty Wolves when hee pleaſeth. This God, where ever he comes, is the Protector

of

of his people ; who, if hee speake but the word, all the enemies of his people are consumed and brought to nothing. And this is the summe of all *Balaams* answer to *Balaak*, *Num.* 23. and 24. that neither force nor fraud could hurt the people of *Israel* while God was with them. *The Churches happinesse*

On the other side, if God leave a people all their strength is gone, as *Sampson* was when his Locks were cut off. A notable instance of this you shall find in *Ier.* 37. God was then withdrawing from his people, tooke away the signes of his presence, and told them they should be delivered up into the hands of the *Chaldeans*: they thought yet to hold it out. But saith the Prophet, *If yee had smitten all the Army of the* Chaldeans, *and none of them had beene left but a few wounded men, they should come and burne your City.* Verse 10. *Amaziah's* case also is most famous; hee had warre with a great company of malicious neighbour Princes that hated him, and he hires 100000 valiant men of *Israel*, and joynes them with his owne forces: But there comes a Prophet, and bids him send these 100000 people backe; why? for *God is not with the armies of* Israel; As if he had said, *Amaziah*, it were all one for thee to carry 100000 wisps of straw, or a hundred thousand dead Carkasses into the field to fight, as a *hundred thousand valiant men*, if God bee not with them. 2 Chr. 25.

While God was with *Sampson*, he could carry the gates of a City upon his shoulders ; when God left him, when his Locks were cut (which were a pledge of *Gods presence*) then they took him and made a foole of him at their pleasure.

If you be not yet satisfied, that all these three things

are

The Churches happineſſe.

are implyed in *Gods preſence:* obſerve further that not onely of *Iehovah*, but even of all the Idoll *gods of the Nations*, the like things are ſpoken.

As firſt, they are ſaid to be *fathers* and *friends* of the people that worſhipped them. Thus the people of *Moab* who worſhipped *Chemoſh*, are ſtiled the people of *Chemoſh*. When *Iudah* joyned himſelfe in marriage with Idolaters, God ſaith of him, *He hath taken the daughter of a ſtrange God*: And elſewhere when God chargeth his people with Idolatry, the indictment runnes thus: They ſay to a ſtocke, thou art my Father; that is thou art my God; as neare unto me as a Father to his Children.

Jer 48 46

Mal. 2. 11.

Ier. 2. 27.

Secondly, all their *proſperity* was ſaid to come from their gods ſuppoſedly preſent among them, and propitious to them. *Wilt thou not poſſeſſe that which* Chemoſh *thy god gives thee to poſſeſſe?* ſayd *Jepthah* to the King of *Ammon*, who tooke *Chemoſh* for his God.

Iudg. 11. 24

Thirdly, their *ſafety*, their *victories* are ever attributed to their gods whom they tooke to be among them; *Our God hath delivered into our hands* (Sampſon) *our enemy*. And the attempts againſt the Heathen, are ſaid to be made againſt their gods: as in *Iſaiah* 46. 2. where there is a propheſie of the taking of *Babylon* by *Cyrus*, it is thus expreſſed, *Bell boweth downe, Nebo ſtoopeth, &c. Their gods are gone into captivity.* So in 2. *King.* 18. 34. *Rabſhakey* vants that, in his Maſters name, *Where are the gods of* Hamath, *and of* Arpad, &c. And it is obſerved as an ordinary practiſe of the *Romans*, that when they came to beſiege any City, they would firſt intreate the gods of that City to leave the protection of it, and come over to them:

Iudg. 16, 24

as

as who should say, leave you off their protection, and then let us alone with them: So then, the summe of all this put together, amounts to thus much, that *Gods presence* in his *Covenant* with any people implyes that they are *dearly beloved* of him, that hee *works all their works for them*, and *shields* and *defends* them against all their enemies. *The Churches happinesse.*

I come now to the *Application* of it, wherein (because I chiefly intend the next poynt, the *Condition of Gods presence*) I will briefly make two or three Collections onely, which I conceive may be most seasonable and sutable to your office, and to the occasion of your meeting here this day.

First, is it so, that the *glory* and *happinesse* of a nation stands in the *presence of God* in his *Covenant:* Then, I humbly pray you all to take notice, what are the greatest evils, and who are the most desperate Traytours, against the *King*, *Church*, and *State* of *England* at this day. I doubt not but you have a multitude of complaints of *Grievances* presented to the *Parliament House:* all (at least pretended to bee) contrarie to the welfare of the State: give mee leave to put up one Great One; and to informe you who bee the Authors of the greatest Grievances, and Evils that can possibly betide the Kingdome of *England*, even they that would *rob us of our God. Solomon* saith, *A man that wasts his Father, and chaseth away his mother*, is a miserable wretch. And I know, if evidence should bee brought into this Honourable Assembly against any one that had deprived the King of a *Subject*, you would think him worthy of severe punishment. But higher, if you should light upon one, that should endevour to deprive the King and Kingdome of a wise *Counsellour*, *Use 1. for discovery of the greatest Traytors:*

1 *Vſe Of The Churches happineſſe*

and *States* man, in the multitude whereof is the *ſafetie* of the Kingdome. But higher yet, if any ſhould bee found that had lift up his hand againſt his Majeſty, the Lords anoynted, who is the *breath of our noſtrils*, if any ſuch ſhould bee diſcovered, would you not ſay of them, as ſhe ſaid to *David*, *Let the ſoule of my Lord bee bound up in the bundle of life, and let the Lord ſling the ſoules of his enemies as out of the middle of a ſling?* yea would not everie true hearted ſubject in the Kingdome ſay thus alſo? O but (Honourable and Beloved) they that would rob us of the *glorie* of our King and Kingdome, that would take away all our *happineſſe*, and *protection*, and *proſperitie*, that would leave us naked to our ſhame, that wee ſhould become a ſcorne and ſpoyle, they are not worſe than any of the former? You will ſay, *Who is hee? and where is hee that dares preſume in his heart to doe ſo?* (I pray ſtay for a full anſwer till the next poynt touching the *Condition of enjoying God* bee unfolded: in the meane time) take this in part: I pray God there bee none ſuch met this day to faſt and pray before the Lord. Everie ſonne of *Belial*, everie one that is a Rebell againſt God, everie one that works wickedneſſe, is *that wicked Haman*, that ſels *Heſter*, and all her people to deſtruction. If there bee any ſuch here, you will give me leave (being Gods Miniſter, and your Servant) to diſcharge my Office faithfully. Should there bee but one ſuch, I ſay, among you that are called together to bee the *Repairers of the breaches*, to ſuch a one let me thus ſpeak; If thou bee found to bee the *Achan*, that keepes God from *going out with our armies*; the *Ionas*, that art ready to caſt away the ſhip, ſo that there is no hope of our ſafetie till thou be caſt out; if thy conſcience accuſe

2 Sam. 25. 29.

Heſt. 7. 5.

thee

thee that thou art a child of *Belial*, an Idolater, a superstitious person, a prophane *Esau*: lay this close to thy heart, how miserable and wretched a man thou art, that not only adventurest thine own soule to most certaine ruine in opposing the Lord; but, as another *Sylla*, thou pluckest out thy fathers purple haire, and depriv'st the Kingdome of the *glorie* of it: so that it may be written upon thy Grave-stone, *This man was the ruine of his King and Countrey.* Judg. 13 24.

1 Vse of the Churches happinesse.

And for the Lords sake (Honourable and Beloved) take it to heart, and lay it up with you, that if *Gods presence* bee our *glorie*, then those that would *rob us of it* are our greatest *enemies*. Thinke of them all, as hee (upon lesse ground) said of the Children of *Dan*. *You have taken away my God, and what have I more.*

2 Vse of the Churches happinesse, direction how to lengthen out our happines.

And secondly, let mee beseech you all in this your great Nationall Councell, and Assembly, to take seriously into your thoughts what may be the best way of *lengthening out our tranquillitie*. Beloved, all the Nations in *Christendome* have beene in grievous perplexities many yeares round about us: wee have beene hitherto kept as another Land of *Goshen*, where light hath still shined, when all others have beene in darknesse. And I know the hearts of some of you have sadly expected when God should come and erect his *Iustice seat* among us, or give the sword a Commission against us: now you are met for this verie thing, to provide for our welfare: for the Lords sake take care to keepe him with us: if hee goe, all goes: we can never light our Candle, if this Sunne bee set: wee shall never fill our Buckets, if this Fountaine bee shut up. All your counsels and advising will bee nothing, if God say, *I will stay no longer in* England: Wee shall then bee a Ier. 37. 10

3 *Vse Of The Churches happineſſe* ſpoyle to any enemy; a few unarmed men will bee too hard for us all.

It is recorded of the *Palladium* in *Troy*, that while that Image remained there, the City was impregnable, and that till the *Greeks* lighted on that ſtratagem to ſteale that Idoll away, they could never winne the City. What ever fancy there was in that, you know how much it concernes us to keeep our GOD with us; let your maine care be to fixe and ſettle him therefore among us, and then wee are ſafe: if you let him goe, we are an undone people.

3 Vſe of the Churches happineſſe. A ground of protection in any undertaking for God.

Thirdly, if *Gods preſence* in his Covenant bee the *glory* and *ſafety* of a people; then may all of you, undertaking any ſervice for GOD, and his Glory, moſt comfortably and ſecurely reſt on God to defend and *protect you* againſt all dangers. It is no queſtion but your enemies are mighty, malicious, and cunning; and it may bee they are digging as deepe as Hell for Counſell to doe you miſchiefe in this great way and worke that you are in. But while *you are with God*, God *will be with you*. Are not *five Sparrowes ſold for a Farthing*, ſaith our Saviour? Are not you more worth than all the Sparrowes in the World? are you not in Gods Worke? As *Caleb* ſaid, The Lord is with us, feare not them, *They ſhall all be bread for us*. Goe on boldly, uſe what providence you can to prevent dangers, but comfortably remember, that *the Name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower, the righteous runne to it, and are ſafe*.

Num. 14 9.

Prov. 18. 10.

Expoſ. in Eſai 30. v. 15

I will conclude this with a ſtory of *Luther*, which he tells of a Biſhop of *Magdenburg*. A Duke of *Saxony* prepared warre againſt him: the Biſhop hearing of it, falls to praying, reforming of his *Church*, and amending

ding what was amisse. One of the Dukes spies then in that City, when he saw him make no preparation for defence, came and asked him, if he did not heare what the Duke was preparing against him? Yes, saith he, I doe; but *Ego curabo Ecclesiam meam, & deus pro me pugnabit.* I must looke to my worke, and the defence of me belongs to God; which when the Duke heard, he disbanded his forces, and acknowledged that hee should proue too weak to deale with that man that ingaged God in the quarrell against him. So follow you on the work, be yee for the Lord, and comfortably rest your selves under Gods wing, to prosper and protect you. So much for their presenr happinesse. *The Lord is with you.*

The condition of enjoying that happinesse.

I proceed now to the second part, the condition upon which this happinesse is to be enjoyed: *for God is with you, while you are with him.* This Adverb *while* implyes

The second part viz. The Condition of enjoying that happinesse 1 Chron. 28 9.

First, the *duration of time*, how long *God will be with you*, so *long as you are with God*; so *long* and no *longer*, for so it is used in the very next words of the text, *if yee seek him, he will be found of you: but if yee forsake him, he wil forsake you.* So *David* saith to *Solomon*, *know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: if thou seeke him, hee will bee found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

Secondly, *While* signifieth likewise the *Degree* and *measure* of *Gods presence.* This is the beame by which GOD weighes out his *presence*, the *Standard* whereby he *measures* it; that is in what *degree* people are *with God*, in that degree he is with them. If they *bee with God* in outward *formalities* only, God will be with them in outward *blessings* only:

The condition of enjoying happinesse

if they be *with God* in all things as *Amaziah* was, but not with a perfect heart, God will be so *with them*: if they be *with God* absolutely & intirely as *Iosia*, and *David*, and *Hezekiah*, *&c.* were *with God*, *God will be so with them*, fulfilling that in *Isai.* 26. that *the most upright God ballanceth out the wayes of the just*: he weighes out their way, and gives them a just proportion; according to that in the eighteenth Psalme, *With the pure God will shew himselfe pure, and with the froward hee will shew himselfe froward*: that is, hee will deale with men as they deale with him.

2 Chron 28. 2, Vers. 7.

Vers. 26.

This is fully laid downe in *Levit.* 26. where God saith, if they walke humbly with him, hee will walke graciously to them: if they *walke* frowardly and stubbornly, and *contrary to him*, hee will *walke contrary to them*: if they vexe him seven times, hee will vexe them seven times. So in the seven Churches, when some of them had *a few things* for God, God would be with them in *a few things*. If they will have some thing *contrary* to God, he will ever have *something against them*: and as their wayes are to him, so the most High God will *measure out* himselfe to them; and that is the *Doctrine* that I am to handle, *viz.*

2 *Doct.* *God will bee with his people to bee their glory, their portion, prosperity, and protection, just as they are with him.*

Before I proceed further with this poynt, give mee leave by way of Caution to remove two or three stumbling blockes, which lye in the way of many men.

1 Cleered of Cavills, by a three fold Caution.

First, when you heare, *that God will bee with his people as they are with God*, take heed you understand it not as some, who (that they may set up the rotten

Dagon

Dagon of mans *free will*, above the *Arke* of Gods *free grace*) doe use out of such conditionall Scriptures, to argue, that God hath an *antecedent*, undetermined, uncertaine, suspended purpose of doing good to a people, which is moved, changed, or determined, according to the ebbings and flowings of their carriage towards him. *The condition of enjoying happinesse.*

A few words may serve in this Assembly: these *conditions* shew not the *moving cause* of Gods presence, but describe the *Subject* or *People* with whom hee is present: the hand of the Diall *makes* not the Clock to goe, but shewes how it doth goe. These *Conditions* quicken us to our dutie, and tell us upon what termes we must look for *God to be with us*, but he himselfe is not thereby limited, but still at libertie to work in us the *Condition* which himselfe requireth of us: Gods love of Friendship (which is his manifesting himselfe in his Covenant) we cannot expect, except we be *with him*; but no Law is hereby laid vpon his *beneplacitum*, his free favor, whereby he *works both the will and the deed*, and causeth his people to walke in his wayes. God gives conditions to us, but takes none from us.

Secondly, much lesse neede wee sticke at the glosse of the Papists, who out of such conditionall Scriptures use to argue our performance of the condition, *formally to merit* Gods gracious presence, and so they will have it to bee rendred by him, not as a *mercifull giver*, but as a *just Judge*. The Scripture is plaine to the contrarie; our merit is nothing but Gods mercie: Wee grant indeed Gods presence to his people is a reward of their obedience; but it is a reward not of justice, but of mercie. So saith the Prophet *David*, *Thou*

O Lord

The condition of enjoying happineſſe

* Pſal. 62. 12.

* *O Lord art merciſull, for thou rewardeſt men according to their works.*

Thirdly, nor yet muſt wee thinke, that when this *Condition* is required of a Nation, that it is ſo limited, that unleſſe the univerſalitie of the people ſhall performe it, the reſt cannot expect Gods preſence with them: for that was never done, no not in *Davids*, nor in *Solomons* time. But it is chiefly meant of the Princes, Rulers, Miniſters, and the face of the people; whoſe wayes (whether good or bad, in regard of Gods nationall proceeding with them) are ever interpreted to bee the wayes of the whole body. Theſe blocks removed, I returne to the Leſſon, viz. *That God is with his people while they are with him*, in the ſenſe before given. For the making this more profitable, I ſhall endevour,

2 Further explicated by the reſolving of a queſtion.

Firſt, to ſhew you what in the Scripture language the *being of a people with God* doth imply.

Secondly, to make *application* of it to our ſelves.

Firſt, what is it for a people *to be with God.*

Queſt. What it is to bee with *God.*

Anſw. 1. Negatively.

Iſai 58.

Micah 6.

I muſt ſhew firſt *Negatively*, what it is not. Secondly, *Poſitively*, what it is. Firſt, *Negatively*, it is not barely to beare Gods Name, and to bee called his people; It is not meerely to draw neare to him in the externall performance of certaine duties: *It is not to hang down the head like a Bulruſh for a day*, though in faſting and prayer: It is not to bring *thouſands of Rams, and ten thouſand rivers of Oyle* before God. You know many, and many people have done all theſe things, yet God hath proteſted, they *were not with him, nor bee with them.*

2 Affirmatively it imports 3 things.

Secondly, poſitively and affirmatively what it is.

It implyes theſe three things.

Firſt

First, to be a holy people, a *Ieshurun*, a *righteous Nation*, to be those that undertake the counter-part of the Covenant, that as God makes himselfe over to bee their God, and *their portion*, so they deliver themselves up to him as a people renewed and sanctified, to become *his portion*. That is a chiefe thing which the Scripture alwayes meaneth, when it speaks a people *to be with God*, that they must be *a holy people*, separated from all iniquity unto God, as was clearely and largely opened in the morning. Read over all the booke of God, and you shall never find that a people are said to come home to God, but when they put away all their abhominations, threw away all their lusts and Idols *to the Moles and to the Bats*, *loathing and detesting themselves for them*, being as the *Doves in the valley*, every one mourning for their owne iniquities, fully determining and resolving never to return to them any more. And indeed if this be not done, it is impossible for a people to *be with God*, or to endure God to *be with them*: For God is *a devouring fire* to wicked men; and all wicked men to him are as *Straw*, *Hay*, *Stubble*, and *Waxe*, which the nearer they are brought to the fire, the sooner they are devoured. Therefore you shall read that the nearer wicked men have at any time beene brought to God, the greater their misery. And for my owne part I question not but if an ungodly man should bee lifted up into Heaven, where God most manifesteth himselfe in glory, he would there be most miserable. *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks of a Temple, upon which was written, *No unholy thing must come neare this place*. This is Gods very inscription. *Hab.* 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evill, and canst not look on iniquity.*

The condition of enjoying happinesse

1 To bee an holy people. Deu 32.9

Isai. 2. Hos 14. Ezc. 7. 16.

The condition of enioying happineſſe

Looke over all the Epiſtles in the new Teſtament, and you ſhall find, that however the externall profeſſion of Chriſtianity admits men to the externall priviledges of Gods preſence, yet unleſſe they be inwardly renewed and ſanctified, there is no being nigh to God, *Iames* 4. 8. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you: Cleanſe your hands yee ſinners, and purge your hearts, &c.*

This is moſt cleare in that great worke of mans *Redemption* by Jeſus Chriſt: when God had created man holy and righteous, God delighted to bee nigh unto him: but ſo ſoone as iniquity was found in him, there was a wall of ſeparation built, and a gulfe made, that never could bee filled up, till the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by his infinite ſufferings did it: And when that worke is done by Chriſt, the Lord will not communicate his Chriſt to any ſoule in the World, but upon theſe abſolute termes, (and God hath ſworn that it ſhall be ſo) that ſo ſoone as he hath delivered them, and brought them neare to himſelfe, in calling them to participate that Redemption, *they ſhould ſerve him in holineſſe and righteouſneſſe all the dayes of their life.* This is the firſt thing, they muſt bee a *holy people.*

Luk. 1.

2 To bee *true worſhippers* of God, in purity.

Secondly, to *be with God*, is to be *true worſhippers of him*, maintaining the purity of his Ordinances from Idolatry and Superſtition. This is abundantly proved *Hoſ.* 11. 12. *Ephraim* (ſaith the Lord) *compaſſeth me.* One would have thought that *Ephraim* was neare to God, when he *compaſſed* him: but ſaith God, *He compaſſeth me with lies.* What is that? with Idolatry, for it is uſually expreſſed in the Old Teſtament, that Idols are *lies*, and *lies* are put for Idols: as in *Iſa.* 49. 20.

Is there not a lie in my right hand? Thus *Ephraim* (that is the ten Tribes) *compasseth mee*, saith the Lord, but *Iudah remaines faithfull with God*, therefore hee ruleth with the Saints. What was *Iudahs faithfulnes*? it was her keeping of the marriage Covenant with more care; when in *Hezekiahs* time (to which the Prophet referreth) Religion was reformed and advanced, then *Iudah was faithfull with God*. For the more full understanding of this second branch, let me commend one observation to you concerning all the Kings of *Israel* and *Iudah* after *Solomons* time; the Scripture sets downe a character of everie one of them, that all the world might know what judgment God had of them. You shall find that of all the Kings of *Israel* (though there were some very brave men, yet) there is not one of them that God acknowledged to have *walked with him*, because they were all *Ieroboamites*, worshippers of the golden Calves. And when hee speakes of any King of *Iudah*, hee ever singles out one thing as the chiefe matter of his commendation; and that is, how hee stood affected in point of Religion: *Such a man was upright with God*: the meaning is, all his dayes *he maintained Gods worship*. And let let mee tell you some of their moralities were no better than they should be. *Asa* in the Text was a cholerick passionate man, and covetous in his old age, and many other weaknesses were found in him; yet because hee went thorow-stitch in the reformation of Religion, *Asa's heart* was said to bee *upright with God all his dayes*. With this God useth to cover all their infirmities as with a veile. The condition of enjoying happinesse.

But if any of the good Kings did but halt in this point, God hath left it upon record, as a blot upon

The condition of enioying happinesse

their honours, therefore are they blamed, if (through their default) *the high places were not taken away*, though the Idolls set up in those places were removed. And in the new Testament, throughout all the time of *Antichrists* apostasie, the true *Church* of *Christ*, that walked with him aright, are described by this Character, that Rev. 14.4 they are a virgin company, *not defiled with women*; that is, they were never guilty of the spirituall pollutions of that Apostaticall Church of *Rome*. This was *to bee with the Lamb, and to follow him whereſoever he goeth.* That is the second, to keepe close to God in his worship.

3 To be on Gods side in all Causes. Exod 32. 26

Thirdly, *to be with God*, is to be on *Gods side*; to be engagad in Gods cause, to appeare in those things wherein God looks that all his friends should stand for him. When the *Levites* would *know neither Father nor mother*, but *slay every man his brother*, or *companion*, or *neighbour*, that they might avenge Gods quarrell; this was to be on *Gods side*. When *Elias* was *zealous* for God, at a time wherein all the kingdome (as he thought) played the Apostates: when *Phinehas* goes with his Iavelin, and executes vengeance on *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, when men stand in the gap; when (in a word) a people are for God and his cause, as *Iehoshaphat* said hee was for *Ahab*, *I am as thou art, and my people as thy people*: My horses as thy horses, and my Chariots as thy Chariots, this is *to bee with God*.

2 King. 19

Num. 25. Ezek. 22. 30. 2 Cron. 18. 2.

And indeed, if this be wanting, people cannot be interpreted to *bee with God*, because God is not acknowledged in his due place, unlesse they be for him with all their hearts, and with all their soule, and all their strength, when he hath most need of them. If a woman will doe many things for her husband,

yet

yet if her heart goe more after her Puppets, her cloaths, her servants, than after him, especially in times of his necessitie, her heart cannot bee interpreted to be with her husband, because hee is not acknowledged in the due place of an husband. So if there be any thing, any cause, any person, that we rather ingage our selves for, than for God and his cause, wee cannot be said to *be with God.* *The condition of enjoying happinesse.*

So now you have the meaning of the *Condition* of *enjoying God, while yee are with him:* It is,

1 To be reconciled to God, and to walk with him as an *holy people.*

2 To continue with him in the *purity of his worship.*

3 To *stand by him in everie cause,* which doth concerne his glorie,

The deductions which might flow from this Doctrine for our use are many; I shall confine my selfe to these two, as being most sutable and seasonable to the time, and your work.

First, matter of *Humiliation,* and mourning before God for time past.

Secondly, matter of *Dutie,* for time to come.

For the first, Honourable and Beloved, you stand this day before the Lord to afflict your soules and (though you be the chosen men of your Tribes, lifted up above your brethren) yet you are now called, not onely to bemoane your owne iniquities, but to beare the iniquitie of the whole Kingdome. And (mee thinkes) I looke upon you, as upon the Prophet *Ezekiel,* when he was to beare the iniquitie of the house of *Israel* and *Judah,* hee was to lye upon his side, and to eat his bread made of *Wheat,* and *Barley,* and *Beanes, Lentiles,* and *Fitches,* miserable *Use 1. Of the second poynt, which is, a Use of deep humiliation.* *Ezek 4.*

1 Vse of the second point.

coarse *bread, and baked with the dung of man*, and *to drinke a little water* for many dayes together. How sad and heavie the Prophets spirit must needs be, when hee was thus to beare such a burthen, is easie to judge. Such a temper of spirit would this day well become you. And now could I but speak to you from the Lord how sad things there are against *England*, in this point of not being with God, could you with patience and grace heare mee; and would the Lord affect my heart and yours in handling and hearing of them, we should make this place a *Bochim*, a place of *weepers*, the stoutest heart would be as Queene *Huzzah*, and her *Ladies*, when they went into captivitie, *tabering on their breasts, and mourning as Doves*, yea howling after the *manner of Dragons*. Could I, as in a mirrour, set before your eyes, how infinitely farre off the body of this Kingdome is from *being with the Lord*, we should wonder that the Lord hath not wholly forsaken us long agone; and that in stead of enjoying this libertie of pleading with God for our lives, for our Prince and Countrey, and for whatsoever is precious to us, wee are not left like unto *Sodom*, and made like unto *Gomorrah*. Take a view of all the three particulars mentioned in the point.

Nahum. 2

Because we are 1 Not an *holy people*.

First, are wee *an holy people?* (I am now pleading Gods cause, and though a poore unworthy man, I stand betwixt God and a Kingdome) I aske againe, Are wee *an holy people?* Are our Princes, our Rulers, our Magistrates, our Ministers, and the body of the people *holy?* Doe wee walke according to the rules of Christianitie, the summe whereof for the practicall part is layd downe in the ten Commandements, and those expositions that our Lord gives of them? Doe

we

we walke thus? I know there is no man here so ignorant as to imagine that wee doe. Alas! the Prophets speech too well befits us: *Ah! sinfull Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evill doers, Children that are corrupters: The whole head is sicke, the whole heart is faint: from the sole of the foot, even to the head, there is no sonndnesse in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrified sores. Ægypt* was never more bespread with Locusts and Frogges, than our Kingdom is with horrible prophanenesse, uncleannesse, oppression, deceit, and whatsoever is a stench in the Lords nostrills. The generalitie of people wearing indeed the Lords Livery, (*being Christened*) and doing the Devills work all the yeare long. Nay, is there any thing this day so hated as *holinesse?* have we not gotten termes to scoffe downe all goodnesse? is not almost every man who will not sweare and be drunke, and be deboyst as a *Turke*, or worse, cryed downe with the odious name of a *Puritan?* That as *Ambrose* said of *Palinus*, a young Noble man of *Rome*, at whom when he was converted to Christ, and left the worlds glory, to carry Christs Crosse, there was more wondring than if a Mule had cast a Foale. And as *Beede* said of the ancient *Britains*, immediately before their destruction by the *Saxons*, that they were come to that height of wickednesse, as to cast *Odium in Religionis professores tanquam in adversarios.* God knowes many thousands are guilty of the same in this Land, this day: the measure of our iniquity seemes to be more than full. O that our hearts could this day bleed for it!

1 *Use of the second point.*

Isai. 1.

Secondly, see what wonderfull cause wee have to be abased for all the injury the Land stands guilty of, in abusing God in the poynt of his *Worship*, which is the

2 Not with God in the matter of his *worship.*

1 Vse of the second poynt.

the defiling of the marriage bed betwixt God and his people. God hath visited all the reformed Churches, brought most of them almost to nothing: yet, passe over and see, whether ever any of them have provoked the Lord in this kind so much as we have done. Let me name foure or five things, too much practised, and too little lamented: God in mercy effect our hearts with them this day.

First, the Articles of our faith, the *depositum*, *the good thing committed* to us, which wee received from our fore Fathers; and should transmit entire to our posterity: oh the miserable defection that wee have made from God, adulterating thereof! Tell me, beloved, what one poynt, what one Article of Faith controverted betwixt us and the Church of *Rome* is there, that our Pulpits, and Presses, and University Acts have not beene bold withall? as if we were weary of the Truth which God hath committed to us: as if indeed, for our not *receiving the truth in love*, God were giving the Nation up *to believe lies*.

Secondly, let me instance in the Lords Day; a day which is a signe betwixt God and his people, that *He is their God that sanctifieth them*. That as Idoll-worshippers are known by keeping holidays to their gods; so Gods people are knowne to be his people, by observing of his *Holy day*.

It is most true, that our ancient Doctrine established, is purer in this poynt than can bee found in most of the Churches, and excellent Lawes we have for the backing of it: but I believe there hath not beene in all the Christian World such high affronts offered to the *Lords day*, as of late hath beene in *England*, and (I am confident) they all lie in the Deck charged, as the sin of

the

the Nation, till by some publicke Act, the fourth Commandement bee restored to its due place and honour. 1 *Vse of the second point.*

Thirdly, goe to another branch, the point of *preaching the Word.* The preaching of the Word is the *Scepter* of Christs Kingdome, the *glory* of a Nation, the *Chariot* upon which life & salvation comes riding: such a treasure as that any wise Merchant would sell all to buy the field wherein this treasure lyes. O that God would humble *England* for the great abuse of this invaluable mercy! What litle care hath the State in general taken to provide that *Christ* might ride in Triumph upon his *white horse*? that the Word of God might spread into every corner of the Land? But, oh the cruelty that hath beene offered to many poore Congregations, in taking away the bread of Life from their mouthes, without any pity! as if the starving and murthering of soules, for which Iesus Christ shed his bloud, were a matter of no moment. And oh the spoile, and havocke that hath beene made among many faithfull and painfull Ministers, for such trifles as will not endure tryall in the Day of the Lords appearing? Could wee as in a mirrour, behold the great guilt wee lie under for these things, and apprehend what great wrath is kindled against the Kingdome for them, how would our hearts tremble before God this day?

Fourthly, but above all, the extream daring, bold audaciousnesse of a generation of men, that have adventured as much as in them lyes, to corrupt Gods worship, that not onely rejoyce to see the Idolatry, and Superstition of *Rome* practised by others,

1. *Vſe of the ſecond point.*

but have dared to ſet *their threſholds by Gods threſhold*, and to dreſſe out all Gods worſhip, according to their own fancies, things too apparent to need any further proofe.

It may be ſome may think, this is no great matter, and much complaint need not be made againſt it: a few diſtinctions will ſalve all that is done to quit it from Idolatry and Superſtition. But as *Lodovicus Vives* ſaith of the *Papiſts* in his dayes, that for ought he ſaw, they (in effect) gave the ſame reverence to their Saints, which the *Pagans* did to their gods: So I may truly ſay of theſe men, (that notwithſtanding all their diſtinctions) little difference is to be found betwixt their practice, and the ſuperſtitions and Idolatries of the Church of *Rome*.

Will ſome ſay, let it be granted that men have bin to blame, (as doubtleſſe multitudes have been too bold) in this kind, yet God forbid, that wee ſhould judge ſo far, as to make them as odious to God, as if they were the bringers of Gods wrath upon the Nation, as if they were as bad as whoremongers, or blaſphemers; or that we ſhould offer to compare them with the groſſe Idolaters of the Church of *Rome*: God forbid ſuch a ſtaine ſhould be caſt upon them. Thus ſome men draw a fine veile over theſe foule enormities.

Good Lord, that the glorious light of the Goſpell in eighty two yeers, ſhould not take away this filme from the eyes of men! Judge you the caſe, you that are Husbands, you that have a ſpirit of jelouſie, bee yee Arbitratours betweene the Lord and this Generation; and ſay, if a wanton look in your owne wife, if a whoriſh dreſſe, if the giving, or receiving of

love tokens, if the leaſt degrees of dalliance would not render your owne wife more abominable to you, than the knowne fornication, or adultery of any other woman whatſoever? Doe you not know that the Church of Chriſt is his Spouſe? Doe you not know that God is more eaſily provoked by a people among whom he walks, than by any other people whatſoever? I beſeech you lay theſe things to heart.

1 *Vſe of the ſecond point.*

Exo. 33. 5.

And let the remembrance of this day, help you in it. This day eighty two yeares agone, the Lord ſet up the Goſpel among us, and took us to be a nation in Covenant with him. Oh the progreſſe that ſome nations would have made! The thankfulneſſe and fruitfulneſſe that ſome people would have attained to in ſo long a time! but that we ſhould grow worſe and worſe in point of Gods *worſhip*, that we ſhould hanker after Idolatry, and Superſtition, and fall away worſe than any of our neighbours, that God hath viſited ſo ſeverely: what ſhall wee ſay, when God comes to reckon with us for theſe things?

Fiftly, adde the horrible prophanation of the holy *Sacrament* of the *Lords Supper*, the promiſcuous multitude every where, not onely allowed, but even compelled to the receiving of it: Multitudes of whom, know not whether Chriſt were a man or a woman, nor how many Gods there be, multitudes wallowing in all prophaneneſſe and licentiouſneſſe; yet if they profeſſe that they be no Papiſts, almoſt every where they are admitted to the polluting of theſe reverend Myſteries, as if wee would compell the Lord to depart away from us.

Ezek. 8.

And then, if we ſhould take in the third branch of

3 Not with God as *ingaged in His Cauſe*

1 Vse of the second point.

ingaging our selves in Gods cause, how little zeale is there for God? The wrongs and cruelties that are done to many, the teares of the afflicted, and oppressed; and so few that will open their mouthes, or appeare to plead any cause which GOD will owne, abundantly proclaimeth this. Verily, beloved, were you all as innocent as *Ezra* was of the Fact among the *Jewes*, of the wretchednesse of the people of *Israel:* If you did know what God looks for at your hands this day, you would rent the very Caule of your hearts before the Lord, and sit downe with him astonished, and refuse to be comforted; and wonder that GOD hath not wholly left us, and delivered up our glory as a spoile, and severely revenged the quarrell of his Covenant.

Ezra 9.

But to come neerer yet, and bring it home into your owne bosomes; what if you your selves bee guiltie of these things? You that are the flower of your Tribes, the chiefe of the Thousands of *England*; You that are lifted up above your Brethren, whom God hath made the Head, and not the Taile of the places where you live, when GOD might have left you to be *hewers of Wood*, and *drawers of water*. And hee hath made some of you Noblemen, some Knights, and Gentlemen, and now called you to bee the Repairers of our breach, to heale and prevent our ruine. What if you your selves have a chief hand in these transgressions? What if among you be found swearers, cursers, adulterers, drunkards, haters of Gods wayes, scorners of his Children, and his Ordinances, men who goe on in your sinfull wayes, and resolve to doe

doe so: and because you are great, will therefore be children of *Belial*, refusing to carry Gods yoke: what if any such should be here? The Lord of heaven forbid. But if there should be any such, I beseech you think what a *Magor-mizzabib*, what a terrour round about you there will be, when God comes to find you, and to reckon with you!

1 *Vse of the second point.*

Are *you* come to *Fast*, and *Pray* before the Lord? Doe *you* come to stand betwixt God, and the Nation, when you wallow in such wayes as GODS soule abhorres? Doe *you* such things as are Rebellion against God, and pull downe his vengeance on us? Doe you call this an *acceptable Day*? Doe you thinke the Lord will accept of any service at your hands? Be ashamed, and confounded, and never rise up till God have broken your hearts, and spoken peace to you in the bloud of Christ. Let deepe humbling thoughts for these things, be now to your souls as those bitter Hearbs wherewith the *Israelites* of olde did eate the Passeover. But if you make nothing of all this, but will goe on carelessely, and walke contrary to GOD, GOD will walke contrary to you, the LORD will *not bee with you.* This is the first use for *Humiliation.*

Secondly, I adde but another of *Exhortation*, and I have done: (I beseech you pardon the Libertie, which your call gives mee; I were unworthy ever to speake more, if I should not now speake freely) You stand all this day before the LORD, and have beene exercised in the Duties of *Fasting*, and *Prayer*: I beseech you tell mee in Gods presence (or rather answer GOD in your owne

2 *Vse of the second point.* Exhortation consisting of 3 branches.

2 Vſe of the ſecond point.

heaits) what was the thing you propounded to your ſelves? was it to keepe a day for Formality? becauſe it is now a received thing in *England*, in the beginning of a *Parliament* to keep a Faſt? Or was it, that by hanging the head as *a Bulruſh* for a day, you might expiate your ſinnes with God, and take a new *Ticket* to ſinne againe? As it was ſaid of *Lewis* the eleventh, that hee would kiſſe his *Crucifix* when hee had done evill, and then God and hee were friends, and he might goe on in his old way againe. If it be ſo, expect a ſad reckoning for this dayes work: you deale with a God that will not be mocked by the greateſt of you.

You ſhall read in *Ezek.* 14. divers of the *Elders* came to the Prophet to inquire of God. *Theſe men*, ſaith God, *have ſet up their Idolls in their hearts*, and they come to enquire of me: Tell them I will anſwer them with a witneſſe, *I will ſet my face againſt them, and make them a ſigne, and a Proverb.* So I ſay from God to the greateſt of you, who brought your ſinnes in the morning, and purpoſe to return to them in the evening, and keepe ſuch a ſolemne day only for a *formality*, and there an end, God will reckon with you for it.

But if you deſire indeed to meete God, and *to be with God*, that *God* may *be with you*, then weigh what I ſhall ſay from the Lord; and if it appeare to be his will, then (as you were taught in the morning) draw it up into a Covenant; Covenant betwixt God and your ſoules, come, and receive the Sacrament upon it, and lye at Gods feet to obtaine grace for performance. My exhortation ſhall be anſwerable to the three branches of the Doctrine.

irſt

Firſt, reſolve every one of you for his owne part to turne to God, to caſt out all your abominations, never to turn to any of your wicked ways from this day forward. It may be this motion ſeemes harſh, and will not eaſily down: (becauſe in our wretched dayes, as the *Turks* uſe to account all Fools to bee Saints; ſo men with us account al Saints to be fools.) But this muſt be done; neceſſary things fal not under deliberation. To live in hell you would not; to live with God you cannot: hard it will be to be damned; impoſſible it will be to be ſaved, unleſſe with full purpoſe of heart you turn to God, and become new creatures. I muſt ſay to you as the Prince of *Orange* ſaid to his ſouldiers at the battaile of *Newport*, when they had the Sea on the one ſide, and the *Spaniards* on the other: If (ſaith he) you will live, you muſt either eat up theſe *Spaniards*, or drink up this Sea; So muſt you, either conquer your luſts, eat up the *Spaniards*, or drinke up the Sea, the devouring Gulfe of Gods wrath: and none of you know how ſoon this time may come, that will yee, nill yee, yee muſt be be brought neer to God, who is a *devouring fire*, utterly to conſume you, if you be *Straw and Stubble*, or to glorifie you if you be *Gold*.

2 *Vſe of the ſecond point.*

1 To turn unto God as an holy people.

The *Pagan* King of *Ninive* ſaw this, that without *turning every man from the wickedneſſe that was in his own hands*, there could not be hope of eſcaping the wrath of God. And therefore you who are Chriſtians cannot expect that God ſhould *be with you* in any thing that you take in hand: till this bee done, God will not onely loath you, but the works of your hands alſo.

2 Be with God in matters of Religion.

Secondly, this done, *be with God* in matters of Reli-

2 *Vſe of the ſecond point.*

* Hag. 2. 11, 12. &c.

* *Religion*: my meaning plainly is this, bee

First, ſuch as cleave to the purity of his worſhip in your own practice.

And then in your great *Counſaile*, bee yee purgers and preſervers of our Religion. Looke throughly what is amiſſe, and pluck up every plant that God hath not planted; throw to the *Moales* and to the *Bats*, every rag that hath not Gods ſtamp and name upon it. That it may be ſaid of this *Parliament* in matter of Religion, as it is ſaid of *Joſiah*, *There was never any like him before him, nor any after him*: So there was never any *Parliament* before this, nor never any after it, that *followed the Lord with all their heart, and all their ſoul, & all their might, according to all the will of God.*

Motives thereunto from the ſecond *Commandement.*

And to provoke you, give mee leave to give you a briefe view of the hedge that God hath made about the ſecond Commandement. The intent of that Commandement is, that Gods people ſhould worſhip him with his owne worſhip, and his own Ordinances, and never dare to tender to him the deviſes, and traditions of men for a homage. Now the Lord knowing the itch, and proneneſſe in men to bee tampering in the worſhip of God, to ſet their *threſholds* by his *threſhold*, hath ſet ſuch a hedge about it, that if a man did conſider it ſeriouſly, hee could not but admire that ever mortall man ſhould dare in the matter of Gods worſhip, to meddle any jot further than the Lord himſelf hath commanded: it ſtanding like the Cherubims, and the flaming Sword, which turned every way to keep the way of

Gen. 2. 24. the Tree of Life.

I. First, hee is *a ielous God*, as if hee ſhould ſay, the matter of my worſhip is to me as the Marriage bed; and

and I am a Husband easily provoked to *iealousie*, which is * *the rage of a man, and will accept no ransome.* 2 *Vse of the second point.*

Secondly, all such are said to hate God, *I will visit the sinnes of them that hate mee.* They all pretend that they are lovers of him. They that made men kisse the Calves, yet would have them sweare *Jehovah liveth. Jeroboam* pretended nothing but respect to God, and to Gods people, when hee set up his *Calves*: so these men pretend reverence and veneration to Gods Ordinances: but God protests that all hate him, which may appeare by the odious names hee gives to their sinne, calling it sometimes *Rebellion*, as being a denying his *Sovereignty*, *Josh.22. 16,22.* Sometimes *Apostasie*, *Jerem.2.13.* Sometimes *Adultery* the most unpardonable sinne betwixt man and wife, *Ezek.16.* And sometimes *Blasphemy. Isai.65.7.* * Pro.6.34

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Thirdly, it is a sinne that hath vengeance, and punishment intailed upon it to the *third and fourth generation.* The *Jews* say to this day; that *there was never any calamitie betided their Nation, since their comming out of* Ægypt, *but there was an ounce of the Golden Calfe in it.* It is a sinne that GOD fails not to visit upon *Children*, *to the third and fourth Generation.* 3

But now on the other side, *God will shew mercy to thousands of them that love him, and keepe his Commandements.* How is that? The Lord interprets them to loue him that purely worship him. As a man who finds his wife faithfull in the marriage bed, judgeth that shee loves him, and that her heart is one with his, what ever other infirmities shee may have. Yea, they are interpreted to keep all his Commandements. 4

2 *Vse of the second point.*

dements. God will truſt them for all his Commandements, whom hee findes faithfull in his worſhip: Yea, to a *thouſand Generations*, hee will remember them, which is longer than this wicked world ſhall ſtand. The kindneſſe and faithfulneſſe of them that maintaine and preſerve the pure Religion and worſhip of God, ſhall ever be in the ſight of God for them and their poſterity.

Oh! let me help your reckoning in the day of the Lord, intreating you for the *Childrens ſake of your owne body*, to lay what I have ſaid to heart, that you may provide that the Ordinances of God be neither taken away, nor defiled, that God may bee purely worſhipped in his owne way for time to come. And that by a Generation of men, who *ſeeke onely to glory in our fleſh*; we be not jugled out of our Religion, nor miſled in ſuch a way of ſervice, as that *Gods ſoule ſhould take no pleaſure in us.*

Job 19.17

Gal. 6. 13.

3 Be with God, in every cauſe of God.

Thirdly, and laſtly, (which is the comprehenſion of all the reſt) *bee on Gods ſide*, ingage your ſelves in every cauſe which is Gods: own what God owns. As Chriſt ſaid, *You ſhall not have mee alway*; that is, in my perſon, but *the poore you ſhall have alway*, and when you will, you may doe good to them. So I ſay, you have not Chriſt with you in his perſon: but you always have his *Cauſe*, his *Truth*, his *Ordinances*, his *Day*, his *Miniſters*, his *Children*, the *Teares* of the afflicted; *all cauſes of Juſtice and Righteouſneſſe, theſe are Gods Cauſes.* GOD would have all his friends zealous for him, and appeare for him, his Church, and his Cauſe. And to inflame your hearts to this, be pleaſed to conſider theſe few *incouragements.*

Motives hereunto.

Firſt,

First, God hath deserved it at your hands, that you should appeare for Him, Hee hath appeared for you when none could: His sonne *Jesus Christ* gave his owne soule a ransome for your sinnes, or else you had perished in Hell for ever. Hee hath made you the *Head*, rather than the *Tayle*: He hath heaped upon you Honour, Wealth, and Friends; and you can give no other reason why you are not more miserable than the poorest Vagrant, that wants both house and home, but onely this, that *GOD hath beene on your side.* Doth not hee then deserve to be owned? They say, *Love is loves Loadstone, and loves whetstone.*

2 *Vse of the second point.*

1 GOD haht deserved it at your hands.

Secondly, Gods *Cause*, his *Church*, and *Children*, have few Friends, and many Enemies, and those Enemies no Babies, but *Principalities and Powers*, Cruell, Cunning, Malicious, and unweariable: And more now than ever. *Satan* knowes his time is short, hee stirs up all his instruments, as if one spirit possest them all. And is it not a shame, that the Lords friends should bee more backward in his cause than the Vassals of Satan are in their Masters?

2 Gods cause hath many enemies, and few frieds.

I adde thirdly, the Lord to punish the Pride, Sloath, Hypocrisie, and Formality of his people, hath of late suffered the enemies of the Church to prevaile exceeding far. The face of *Christendome* this day so miserably rent with Warres, Sedition, Heresies, and Schismes is a most ruthfull spectacle. Who can looke upon poore *Germany*, and not even bee compelled to weepe over the Booke of the *Lamentations* againe? And GOD knowes whose Lot is next: Little quiet I feare is to bee

3 GOD hath, for punishment to his *Church*, permitted the enemy to prevaile very far.

2 Vse of the second point.

expected in *Christendome*, till the Beast his Kingdom be ruined.

Now wee know that the Lord accounts that the most seasonable time for his friends to owne his cause, when the enemies are most violent against it: then God saith, *Who is on my side, who?* When the pressures of the Church are greatest; the opportunities of appearing for the LORD are most seasonable, and great are their Rewards who then sticke to him. Every one would gladly embrace a glorified CHRIST: but when the whole Councell shall reject him; then, with *Nicodemus* to plead for him, this is honourable. When hanging upon the Crosse, his Disciples runne away from him, then with *Joseph* of *Arimathea* boldly before *Pilate* to shew love to him, this is acceptable.

When the *Jewes* had an exalted *Mordecay*, then the people of the Land would *turne Iewes*. The *Samaritans* would helpe to build the *Temple*, when the *Persian* Emperour is a Friend to the *Church*: But our Lord saith, Let mee have the man that will not *bee ashamed of mee before a froward and adulterous Generation*. Marke, hee doth not say in a gracious Generation (then no man will be ashamed of him) but in an *adulterous, and froward Generation*.

4 Gods Cause is the best, & his side will prove at last the prevailing party.

Fourthly, when you strike in on the *LORDS side*, on his Churches side, on his Causes side; you shall not onely strike in with the best side, with the best Cause, but with the most prevailing; with that side which must and shall have the victory at the long runne. It would make a

man

man never to be afraid to bee ingaged in a quarrell where hee is sure of the Victory. The Barke wherein *Christ*, his *Church*, and *Cause* are, may bee tossed, but can never bee drowned. *Populus Romanus sæpe prælio victus, nunquam bello.* The *Romans* lost many Battails, but they were never overcome in a set Warre; at the long runne they crushed all their enemies. So all the enemies that seem too hard for Christs cause, and his Church, must perish. Hee must rule, *till all his enemies be made his foot stoole,*

2 *Vse of the second point.*

Florus.

Psal. 110.

In *Zachary* the 12. there are foure or five admirable expressions. The Church is compared to a *Hearth of Fire* in the midst of a *Wood.* Like a *Torch of Fire* in the midst of a *Sheafe.* Whether the *Wood*, or the *Fire*, the *Torch*, or the *Sheafe* will have the victory judge yee. In *verse* the second, she is compared to a *cup of Poyson*, that will end them who thinke to devoure it. To an heavy Stone, that will returne upon those to their ruine, who endeavour to carry it away. So shall it bee with all Nations that fight against the Church and cause of Christ. And if any man should happen to lose his life in the Lords quarrell; as the *Angell* said to Daniel, *Hee shall stand up in his lot:* Hee shall rise up, and follow CHRIST, cloathed with glory. *Revelations* the nineteenth, the Armies in Heaven, that followed Christs triumphant Chariot, were such as were *holy*, and *faithfull*, *and loved not their lives to the death.* Would not this move any man to be on Gods side?

Dan. 12. 13

5 The consideration of the office and calling of this house of Parliament should provoke them hereunto aboveothers.

Lastly, Honoured, and beloved in the Lord) let the consideration of your great place, and office that

2 *Vſe of the ſecond point.*

God Almighty hath called you to raiſe up your ſpirits to endevour great things for the LORD. For my part, I am too weake to fathome in my thoughts, what the great worke is to which you are called together by God. You are met to ſeeke the good of the Land, the good of the Church, a greater charge than the ſalvation of your owne ſoules, is put into your hands. It may be not only our welfare, and peace, and Religion: but even the welfare of all *Chriſtendome*, under God, depends upon your meeting. That God that might have left you (as I ſaid) to be *hewers of Wood*, and *drawers of Water*, hath called you to bee *Repairers* of all our *breaches*; and the Prayers, and bleſsings of all GODS people are upon you. The eyes of all the Nation, next under GOD, and our gracious Sovereigne, are fixed upon you.

Oh what a mighty tye doth this put upon the ſoule of every one of you, to lay aſide all buſineſſe, and pleaſures, and luſts, and ends of his owne, and ſolely to ſtudy how to advance CHRISTS cauſe, and appeare where Chriſt would have him appeare. Your worke is great, our evils are many: but be not diſcouraged; onely remember, that *God is with you, while you are with him.* As it is in *Zech.*4. *Who art thou, O great Mountaine? before my ſervant* Zorobabel, *thou ſhalt become a plain.* If God be with *Zorobabel*, Mountains ſhall become Plains before him. God can make thoſe things, that you apprehending as *Hydra's* and Monſters would tremble to think of, to fall before you as the leaves of a tree.

There is a notable ſtory of *Luther*, when hee firſt came out againſt the Pope, *Albertus Cranzius* (a Biſhop

Bishop that liked well his project, but thought it impossible to bring it to passe) wrote to *Luther*, *Frater, Frater abi in cellam, & dic, Miserere mei Deus*, Frier, Frier, goe to thy Cloister, and say, Lord have mercy upon mee, this worke is too hard for thee; yet *Luther* wrought wonders. One *Luther* will doe great things, if GOD be with him: *One Parliament* may doe great things, if *God bee with them.*

2 *Vse of the second point.*

Resolve upon it this day to be for God, make this another blessed seventeenth of *November*. But if through feare, treachery, cowardise, pride, or sloth, you withdraw your selves from Gods work; *Deliverance shall come* to Gods people another way: and you for your part shall not onely lose your share in the comfort; but you shall bring all the guilt, and sinnes that the Nation groanes under, to stand upon your owne score before God. Yea, (you will think it is a great word; but I speak it not rashly) it may be more guilty, than the very Authours of our mischiefs, who have beene firme to their owne principles, in the bringing of them in: and you contrary to your light, and office doe further them, if you not withstand them. As hee who solicited an Emperour for a pardon for one that had killed two men, and received a denial upon that very reason, that the Delinquent had twice imbrued his hands in bloud; replyed to the Emperour: Nay, you killed the second; for if hee had beene cut off for the first, hee had never killed the other. So abundance of evils committed by private men, are not the sinnes of the Rulers and Princes at the first, but may afterwards through their connivence or want of zeale, be truly reckoned

2 *Vse of the second point.*

reckoned and accounted theirs. God forbid that you should bring so great a burden upon your own souls and consciences. *Vp and be doing*, and the *Lord be with you* in his cause.

Now although your wisdoms best know what is to be done, and it may seem unfit to prescribe such a Colledg of Physicians a way of a Cure: Yet give me leave onely to propound one thing (even the same which was prest in the forenoone) which I suppose would prove a *Catholike* remedy for all our evils, and the greatest meanes for the lengthning out of our tranquillitie, and the healing of all our distempers: that is, the promoting, establishing, and mayntaining a faithfull, learned, painfull, preaching Ministery: that every *Candlestick* may have a *Candle*, that every *Flock* may have a faithfull *Shepheard* to guide them. This is the thing I would propound to you. This was the course *Jehoshaphat* took, who sent *Princes and Levites, who taught in* Judah, *and went about through all the Cities, and taught the people.*

2 Chron. 17.7.

Blessed be God for the light that shines among us. Yet I must tell you that of nine or ten thousand Parishes, which they say are in *England*, I believe there are many thousands, which these eighty yeers have not had the blessing to enjoy (at the least any long time) a setled, faithful, preaching Ministerie. So that I believe, (and I speak somwhat from experience) that many thousands, if not thousands of thousands, know not the right hand from the left, in the very principles of the Doctrine of Christ. What ever be the cause, whether it be that our Laws and Constitutions are defective: whether the negligence or corruption of our Governours; whether the want of a

preaching

preaching maintenance, or whether all these be the fault: Certaine it is, there hath beene hitherto a τὸ κατέχον, somewhat which hath hindred the spreading of it. 2 *Use of the second poynt.*

And it is worth your most diligent enquirie, whether the neglect of this hath not beene one main cause of the ill successe of so many former *Parliaments*. Could you provide mercifully for people in this, you would make all safe, and *England* would thanke you as long as it is *England*.

To incite you, be pleased to consider but these two things.

First, we deserve no further the name of a Christian Nation than this is done, nor any further than this is advanced. This is the Scepter whereby Christ rules: The dwelling of his Word with a people, is the greatest proofe of their owning him for their *Prince*, and his acknowledging them for his owne *Subjects*. Is any Countrey esteemed a part of a Princes Dominion, that is not ruled by his Lawes? Neither can any Land be accounted Christs Kingdome, where the preaching of the Word, which is the *Rod of his power* is not established. And the Lord hath ever esteemed the hinderers of his word, to be the men that would not have Christ rule over them.

Secondly, if all the good Lawes in the world were made, without this, they would come to nothing; order what you can, leave this undone, you will never do the thing you aime at. Magistrates and Ministers of Justice will not execute them, and people will not obey them. *The dark places of the Land are* ever *full of the habitations of wickednesse.* But if Christ *smite the earth with the rod of his mouth*, *the Wolfe shall dwell* Psalm. 74. 20. Isaiah 11. 4, &c.

Uſe of the ſecond poynt.

with the Lambe, and the Leopard ſhall lye downe with the Kid, the Calfe, and the yong Lion, and the fatling together, and a little Child ſhall lead them. There ſhall nothing hurt nor deſtroy, where Chriſts Scepter rules: Your Lawes cannot give men new hearts, nor new ſtrength; that is the priviledge of the Lawes of Chriſt.

The Poets ſpeake of excellent Muſitians, who by the power of their Muſicke made ſtones leap into Walls, Beaſts to bee tame, &c. This will doe more, this will take the ſtone out of mens hearts, this will give them a new heart; this will make all the Commandements eaſie; there is a kinde of omnipotencie in it. I beſeech you amongſt all your excellent purpoſes for our good, let this bee the firſt, and chiefeſt: If this will not doe, nothing will:

If they heare not Moſes *and the Prophets, they will not believe though one riſe from the dead.*

FINIS.

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Gods free Mercy
TO
ENGLAND.

Presented as a Pretious, and Powerfull motive to Humiliation:

IN A SERMON

Preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at their late solemne Fast, *Feb.* 23. 1641.

By EDMVND CALAMY, *B. D. and Preacher at Aldermanbury London.*

JOEL 2. 12, 13, 14.

Therefore also now saith the Lord, Turne ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rent your heart, and not your garments, and turne unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse, and repenteth him of the evill: Who knoweth if he will returne and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meate-offering, and a drink-offering unto the Lord your God?

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